

# YOUR Health

Los Angeles County Department of Health Services - Public Health

Volume III; Number 2; Winter 2000

## ZZZZZZZZs Are Good for Your Health

Did you know that adults require seven or eight hours of sleep to function at their best? That's because sleep gives the body a chance to rest and make any necessary repairs from illness, injury, and the stress of everyday life. One third of our lives is spent sleeping and has a significant effect on our health and well being. But, many of us lack the amount of sleep we need, which makes it difficult to carry out our daily activities.

**Sleep Deprivation** occurs when a person develops a sleeping pattern in which they repeatedly get less than the recommended sleep required per night. Once



a person is sleep deprived, lost sleep cannot be made up going to bed early the next night. There are

many reasons why people become sleep deprived. The following are some of the reasons that prevent us from getting at least 7-8 hours of sleep a night:

- Social activities
- Working later shifts
- Parenting issues
- Sleep disorders
- Environmental factors such as temperature or noise
- Medication
- Lack of physical activity

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## Scooter Safety

Emergency rooms are treating increasing numbers of injuries related to scooters—the popular item available everywhere. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) reported there were more than 9,400 emergency room-treated injuries last year. Over 4,000 scooter-related injuries were treated in emergency rooms last August alone. Of these injuries 90% were to children under the age of 15.

### CPSC recommends that riders should:

- Wear proper safety gear (helmet, wrist, knee and elbow pads) each time you ride
- Follow traffic guidelines
- Ride solo (this equipment is made for single riders)

Wearing protective gear can help prevent injuries because they are designed to absorb the shock of the impact and should be worn when riding a bike, or using in-line skates, skateboards and scooters.



# Sleeping Deprivation: Continue from page 1

## How can you develop a good sleeping routine?

Antronette Yancey, M.D., M.P.H., Director of Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, suggests the following:



- Get regular exercise
- Avoid long naps
- Allow enough time to sleep, about 7-8 hours a night
- Sleep in the same room and bed every night
- Keep the bedroom free of noise and disruptions like a phone and TV
- Turn the clock face away from the bed. Repeatedly checking the time can disrupt your sleep
- Don't eat, drink alcohol, or smoke for two or three hours before you go to bed
- Make sure your bedroom is dark—too much light can disturb your sleep
- Take a warm bath before going to bed



# Fifteen tips to plan a healthy diet and lose weight safely

**By Norliza Tayag, RD  
Nutrition Program**

For many, the holiday season brings resolutions to lose weight after a season of entertaining and eating. Practicing a healthy lifestyle all year long and not just immediately after the holidays will reduce the risk of heart disease, diabetes, stroke and weight gain over the long term. Here are some helpful tips to put you on the road to good health!



(NAT Tools for Good Health, <http://www.nat.uiuc.edu> or Interactive Healthy Eating Index, <http://www.usda.gov/cnpp>) or have it evaluated by a Registered Dietitian

- 1 Keep a food diary.** This can help you pay close attention to the foods that you eat. Keep track of all your meals, snacks and beverages.
- 2 Review your diary.** Using your diary, analyze your diet online

**3 Decrease calorie intake.** Eating 500-1000 less calories per day could result in a reduction of

about 1-2 pounds per week. However, it is usually not considered safe to eat less than 1200 calories per day unless advised to do so by a physician or qualified healthcare provider. A low-fat diet that is filled with fruits and vegetables and other high-fiber, low-calorie foods may help keep the pounds off. Just cutting out 2 cans of regular soda a week can result in a 5 pound weight loss in one year!

**4 Get moving! Increase calorie output with exercise.** To establish a habit of regular physical activity, make simple, small changes. Try getting 30 minutes of physical activity most days of the week. Try a variety of different activities to ward off boredom. Here are

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some tips to get you moving:

- Instead of meeting a friend for lunch, meet for a walk.
- Wash your car by hand instead of using the car wash.
- Use manual gardening tools to mow, trim and rake.

**5 Eat more fiber.** Adding fiber can help you feel full with less food. Start by switching to whole grain breads and cereals, eating at least five servings of fruits and vegetables per day and eating beans and legumes two to three times per week.

**6 Decrease fat.** One gram of dietary fat has more than twice the calories as one gram of carbohydrate. Some tips to decrease fat in your diet are to consume lean meat and skinless poultry, choose low-fat or skim dairy products and check food labels for fat facts.

**7 Reduce stress.** Find relaxation methods that work for you to limit excessive eating triggered by stress. Try yoga, reading or massage therapy.

**8 Eliminate “boredom eating”.** Make a list of at least 10 things to do when you’re bored and post it on the refrigerator. When you get bored, instead of opening the refrigerator, go through your list of favorite things to do.

**9 Eat a variety of healthy foods.** Fruits and vegetables have less calories and more vitamins and minerals than fast foods and processed meals. Eating a variety of

these foods helps provide vitamins, minerals, fiber, phytochemicals, all of which may help reduce chronic disease risk. You don’t need to give up foods when trying to maintain or lose weight.



**10 Eat small and frequent – but PLANNED meals.** Don’t skip meals it can result in overeating due to hunger. There’s no rule about eating three meals a day. Nevertheless, it does help to establish regular eating patterns. Studies show that missed meals can lead to impulsive snacking and overeating and may even lower the rate at which your body burns energy. You’ll likely eat less when serving bowls and platters aren’t placed on the table. Use smaller bowls and dinner plates so small portions look like more.

**11 Limit alcohol intake.** If you are going to drink, do so in moderation. One 12-ounce can of beer contain 150 calories and a 5-ounce glass of wine contains 100 calories. Some tips to decrease the calorie content of your beverage are to dilute with water, ice or club soda. Learn to sip, not gulp your beverage to make it last longer.

**12 Write down a list of your favorite foods and include one serving from your favorite food list each day.** If you like to eat junk food, include them. Limit the amount of servings from the less-healthy choices, but don’t deprive yourself of foods you enjoy.

**13 Drink water.** Include plenty of fluids in every meal. The average adult should consume 8 cups of water per day.

**14 Practice portion control.** Learn what a cup of cooked vegetables or 3 ounces of meal looks like on your plate. An important part of healthful eating is monitoring portion sizes. This can be especially challenging when eating in restaurants. When eating out, divide the meal and take half home for the next day, split a meal with a friend, or order an appetizer as your main course.

**15 Focus on a healthy lifestyle for a lifetime!** Strive for your best weight for optimal health. That’s not necessarily the lowest weight you could be – or what you consider your “ideal” number. Your healthy weight is a realistic goal that you can achieve successfully through eating healthy and keeping active.

## Resources on the Web

American Dietetic Association  
[www.eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org)  
Weight-Control Information Network  
[www.niddk.nih.gov/health/nutrit/win.htm](http://www.niddk.nih.gov/health/nutrit/win.htm)

# GOOD DENTAL CARE BEGINS WITH FLUORIDATED WATER

What is the best way to prevent tooth decay? Nationwide tests show that fluoridation reduces tooth decay by 20% – 40% in children, according to the County's Department of Health Services. Currently three cities – Los Angeles, Long Beach and Beverly Hills – have fluoridated water. That means that about 44% of the County's population benefits from fluoridation.

## Fluoride Benefits Everybody

Considered one of the ten great Public Health Achievements of the 20th Century by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, fluoride is the major factor for the decline in tooth decay over the last fifty years. And the benefits are not just for children.

"Fluoridation reduces cavities in adults as well and prevents cavities on exposed root surfaces, which is a condition that affects older adults in particular," said Dr. Timothy Collins, Dental Director for the L.A. County public health department.

Fluoride is a naturally occurring substance already found in water and soil. In Southern California, water sources generally carry .2 – .6 parts per million (PPM). The optimum level of fluoride in Southern California to aid in preventing tooth decay is .8 PPM.

"Water fluoridation is an upward adjustment of the naturally occurring

fluoride level to a level in a water supply that will prevent tooth decay," says Dr. Collins.

Current scientific research shows that fluoride is safe and does not contribute to any health risks.



## Cost Benefit

One of the most important benefits is the drastic cost reduction for oral health care, says Dr. Collins.

"Chair-side dental procedures cost so much money and are so labor-intensive that water fluoridation should be our first plan of attack," he says. "Studies show that for every dollar spent on fluoridation, \$140 are spent on dental bills. In areas where dentistry is more expensive, that figure may grow considerably."

The cost for fluoridated water in the city of Los Angeles is approximately 35 cents per person per year. As Dr. Collins points out, "for the price of one filling, you can get a lifetime of dental health with fluoridation."

Dr. Collins has been spearheading an effort to raise the levels of good dental health throughout the County by working with local

civic groups and agencies to secure fluoridation for public water systems. Recent surveys show that most Californians want their local water system to be fluoridated.

"Fluoridation is an inexpensive, medically proven method to safely prevent tooth decay, says Dr. Collins. "My best advice as a dentist to all of my patients is to encourage water fluoridation efforts in their communities. Not only does it promote good oral health, it reduces their dental bills considerably. That's something everyone can smile about."

## YOUR Health

**YourHealth** is published quarterly by the L.A. County Department of Health Services, Public Health. You are welcome to make copies of this newsletter.

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